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PARTY ACTIVITIES

Party Personnel: Quality Instead of Quantity: RADYANSKA UKRAINA (29 November) comes as close to admitting that the Party is topheavy with undesirable membership as the Soviet radio ever does. The wide gap between the rapidly growing ranks of the Party and the qualitative make-up of the membership is yet to be bridged, the paper asserts. That problem is still awaiting solution, and the way to do it is to improve political education and to restrict the admission of new members at the same time.

The policy of limiting admissions to the Party and concentrating on the improvement of the political education and the 'hardening' of communists should be continued.

Ukrainian version:

Slid i dali prodovzhuvaty liniu na obmezheniya pryomu v partiu, na polypshennya spravy politychnoy osvity i partiynogo zagartuvannya komunistiv.

Candidates and other prospects for Party membership, the paper insists, should be thoroughly checked for political loyalty and administrative ability, and that, it is claimed, will put an end to nepotism and other "anti-Party" practices which are still observable here and there. Thus, "people with a dark past" (ludyna s temnym mynulym) were recently found among the leadership of the Voroshilov rayon Party, Odessa oblast, and others of similar uncertain background were discovered elsewhere. Too many Party Committees have been neglecting the Marxist-Leninist training of their members, and the result is that too many communists "are unworthy of the high honor that goes with Party membership" (negidny vysoloi chesti nosyty zvannya chlena partii). Among the other irregularities in the matter of admission to Party membership, according to the paper, is the fact that many rayon Committees are wont to go over the heads of the primary organizations which alone are expected to deal with candidates and new applicants. The almost insuperable difficulties involved in up-rooting nepotism and similar malpractices by administrative measures from above are inferentially admitted by the paper which argues that the situation can be improved only by a "politically enlightened" personnel. (Of some interest, in this connection, are the complaints voiced by the same RADYANSKA UKRAINA on numerous previous occasions that reports on violations of intra-party regulations received by "higher Party instances," that is oblast Committees, were frequently referred back for action by the lower officials who had originally committed them.)

Previous regional comment on the cadre situation is in similar vein. DESNYANSKA PRAVDA (22 November) says a number of local communist officials, far from trying to remedy the already unsatisfactory cadre situation in the Party, continue to appoint "persons who are not up to standard" to executive positions. The mentioned standard, of course, implies approved political loyalty as well as business ability, both of which are said to be lacking in the members who made their way into the Party through "friendly relationship, personal devotion or blood relationship." The Chernigov oblast communists were "unanimous" in their approval of the 19th Party Congress resolutions pertaining to requirements for Party membership but, the paper hints, they have not shown such unanimity in eliminating the "serious personnel shortcomings" they had been instrumental in bringing about:

A great number of workers who know their work but sharply condemn shortcomings are driven out by such leaders under various pretences.

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Here again a "politically enlightened personnel" is recommended as a cure-all for many intra-Party ailments for which no other remedy has as yet proved effective. And this claim is reiterated in almost identical terms by ZAKARPATSKA PRAVDA (27 November) which states frankly that the improvement of the cadre situation "is impossible" (nemozhlivo) without a fundamental improvement of political indoctrination.

It is unfortunate, says KURSKAYA PRAVDA (28 November), that political confidence and skill are not always the determining factors in the admission of new members to the Party. Otherwise the oblast would not be faced with the enormous problem of raising "the low political level" of the communists. And despite the efforts already made in that direction, that problem "has not yet been fully solved." A broadcast from Tbilisi (29 November) even traces certain ideological perversions by the Philosophy Institute of the Georgian Academy of Sciences to the admission of the "wrong people" to high Party posts. The director of the Institute, Teretoli, is said to have distorted the true Marxist-Leninist line in his book "Toward A Marxist-Leninist Understanding of the Science of Logic." This point, however, is not amplified.

Party Discipline: One and Indivisible: It is high time that some of the oblast Party leaders realized, says KRYMSKAYA PRAVDA editorially on 19 November, that they are just as much subject to rigid Party discipline as are the rank-and-file members. This, it is recalled, was pointed out by Malenkov and incorporated in the 19th Congress resolutions. Those who still assume that "for 'chosen' Party officials discipline is not necessary" must be disabused of their notions since that point was made clear at the last Party Congress. The paper cites the case of a high Communist official who told the Krasnogvardeisky rayon Party meeting: "decide what you like but I shall not fulfill it. I am the director ... and have special rights." This, it is pointed out, is the type of irresponsible leader not wanted by the Party. The struggle to weed such members out of the organization should be intensified particularly in view of the fact that such instances of high-handedness are "neither rare nor isolated." Such cases have been observed at the Udarnik Artel, the oblast machine plant and a number of other enterprises in Simferopol.

RADYANSKA PODILYA says (24 November) that one of the most vicious forms of Party and State discipline violation is "the suppression or distortion of the truth" resorted to by Party officials who are unwilling to face unpleasant reality. The paper appeals to actual and potential discipline violator "not to color reality" (ne prykrashaty diysnisty) and to educate their subordinates "in the spirit of truthfulness and honesty." The "concealment of the truth" is also the object of a KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA discussion of 29 November. This paper believes that cheating the Party and the State is the direct consequence of the prevailing attitude among communist officials according to which discipline is interpreted as being "more strict toward the rank-and-file and more lenient toward the leaders." The editorial intimates that abuses of official position, whether for reasons of personal gain or inefficiency, are not confined any single locality but are widespread throughout the Republic. This situation is further aggravated by the fact that local Party organizations "are not paying attention" (ne udelyayut vnimania) to disciplining undisciplined workers:

A checkup has revealed that the managers of many building and contracting organizations of the Republic have not yet eliminated the antistate practice of doctoring reports on the fulfillment of State plans.

In a long article carried by PRAVDA on 1 December but not broadcast, the Secretary of the Azerbaijan Central Party Committee, Samadov, states that dishonest Party

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attitude toward the interests of the State has led to a number of shortcomings in the Republic's oil industry. Unspecific about the nature of the mentioned failings, the author nevertheless asserts that oil and other industrial officials have been cheating the government. The manager of the "Molotov-neft" oil trust, for example, was found to be exaggerating his production reports and concealing the actual production figures from the Party and the State. The rayon Committee and the trust's Party organization had been informed about the faked reports and other violations committed by the management but failed to do anything about them. There is still a great deal of nepotism within the Party organizations which must be eliminated, the Secretary declares. Individuals of questionable political and executive reliability are frequently appointed to leading positions by their friends and relatives "on the inside" and even protected from criticism. High-handed administration and shouting (administrativnoye, okriki) so often resorted to by Azerbaijan leaders will not remedy the situation, Samedov says. The very fact that so many communists are so often subjected to "Party penalties" (partiyne vzyskania) for a variety of offenses "betrays ... a wrong method of leadership" (svidetelstvuyet ... o nepravilnom stile rukovodstva). The only solution offered by the Secretary for the problem of dishonesty is the familiar "higher standard of political education" among Party workers and more attention at the top to honest criticism coming from the bottom.

Party discipline which among other things calls for implicit loyalty to one's superiors and blind obedience to orders from above does not on the face of it appear to jibe with the idea of criticism "from below," particularly in the case of Communist officials imbued with the "Stalin theory" of centralized authority (edinonachalie). Unrestrained criticism from the bottom as it were, whether in the Party or elsewhere, would naturally place the mentioned theory in danger of objective refutation. Discussing "the most rigid discipline" (strozhayshaya distsiplina) and criticism in the same context, Secretary Samedov leaves no room for doubt as to the official view on their relative importance. And his prefatory remark on the subject as quoted below, may at least in part explain the enormous difficulties in fitting criticism from below into the Soviet scheme of things:

The most rigid discipline, monolithic unity and the unity of will and action have always been the methods whereby the Party successfully effected the sharpest turns in politics

Russian version:

Strozhayshaya distsiplina, monolitnost, edinstvo voli i deistviy vsegda byli sredstvami, pri pomoshchi kotorykh partiya uspešno osushchestvlyala samye krutye povoroty v politike

Suppression of Criticism Must Cease: In an otherwise familiar discussion of the criticism theme ZARYA VOSTOKA points out editorially (18 November) that the persistent contempt for criticism from below is merely one of the twin evils in intro-party democracy, and probably a lesser one at that. It is revealed, in this connection, that certain officials are adept at using the privilege of free criticism to further their own nefarious ends ranging from "settling personal accounts" with enemies by way of "malicious slander" (zlostnaya kleveta) to anti-Soviet activities. Here the paper unwittingly mitigates the "crime" of the oft-rebuked stiflers of criticism by stressing the "exclusive importance of ... honest and principled criticism" (iskluchitelnoye znachenie ... chestnoi i printsipialnoy kritiki). The head of the Georgian branch of the USSR Chemical Industry is said to have "confessed" that in his slanderous declarations against honest and loyal workers he was moved by "anti-Soviet aims" (anti-sovetskide

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tseli). Emphasizing the political angle of the case, the paper says that the official's misbehavior is a logical sequence to his political past in view of the discovery that "he had been a member of Social Revolutionary (eser) Party." Another official, "the well-known Chatunava" (khorosho izvestnyi Chatunava), is said to have tried to discredit dozens of honest workers. A commission of inquiry subsequently established that while his accusations had been groundless, he was not entirely guiltless himself of embezzling state funds:

Supporting honest criticism in every way, the Party organizations must at the same time maintain the struggle against those who, under cover of criticism, attempt to spread lies and slander. The Party has had to deal many times with slanderers. The Party has been unmasking their true hostile faces. A malicious slanderer, as proved by experience more than once, is the enemy of the Party and the Soviet system.

Russian version:

Vsemerno podderzhivaya chestnuyu kritiku, partiynie organizatsii obyazany v tozhe vremya borotsya s temi, kto pod znakom kritiki pytayutsya seyat lozh i klevetu. Nashel partii ne raz prikhodilos imet delo s klevetnikami. Partia razoblachala ikh podlinnoye vrazheskoye litsa. Zlostniy klevetnik, kak eto ne raz podtverzhдалos na dele, vrag Partii i sovetskogo stroya.

Brief and unspecific comment on retaliations against honest critics in parts of Belorussia is made by ZVYAZDA on 20 November. Party workers are reported to have been thrown out of their jobs and refused reinstatement even after their criticism of higher-ups were proved to be well grounded. A summarized version of RADYANSKA ZHITOMIRSHCHINA (21 November) speaks of the "un-Party attitude" (nepartiynoye otnoshenie) toward criticism from the rank-and-file communists still prevailing among the leaders of Barashevskiy, Korosten and other (unnamed) rayons, but gives no further details. Referring to criticism in context of other Party activities, PRAVDA (26 November) hints that many a would-be critic prefers to keep silent for fear of retaliation. We must make sure, the paper insists, "that every critic is confident he will find support" in the Party organizations. Officials unable to refrain from suppressing criticism and persecuting the critics "are not mature enough to be leaders" and cannot therefore expect the Party to trust them. RADYANSKA UKRAINA (4 December) speaks of recent evidence of "bureaucracy and formalism" among Party officials in Volhynia and Vinnitsa oblasts. The rayon Party meetings currently held in those oblasts are said to have brought to light numerous instances of Communist officials "attempting to utilize the platform for suppression of criticism." The paper quotes a recent issue of VINNITSKA PRAVDA on the "shocking behavior" of the Kalininsky rayon Party leadership which persecuted the local press for having dared to criticize its shortcomings.

The Komsomol: Needs Stricter Party Control: Paralleling its Communist Party mentor structurally and functionally, the Young Communist League is frequently criticized as guilty of identical shortcomings in its own sphere of activities, that is among the non-partisan youths. Official strictures against Komsomol failings therefore usually wind up with a rebuke to the appropriate Party organization which bears the ultimate responsibility for the junior communists. KIROVOGRADSKA PRAVDA (21 November) complains that Party control over Komsomol activities has been considerably relaxed in Kirovogradskiy, Novokhangel'skiy,

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Adzhamskiy, Petrivskiy and a number of other rayons. The result is a deterioration of political work among the oblast's youth. Although the oblast Komsomol Committee itself is reported to have lost interest in the activities of its subordinate organizations, it is the Party that must account for its "lack of vigilance" and the failure to take the situation in hand.

SEVERNAYA PRAVDA (25 November) says that any diminution of Party "solicitude" (zabota) for the Komsomol is bound to have an adverse effect on the young communists. The latter are called upon to set examples of honest and unselfish work wherever they happen to be, thereby encouraging the non-Komsomol youths to emulate their achievements. This, however, is not the case with many of the Kostroma oblast Komsomols who are even slower than their non-partisan brethren. In the Oktyabrskiy industrial logging camp, for example, "not a single komsomol" (ni odin iz komsomol-tsev) has been fulfilling its production norm. Of the 86 Komsomols employed in the Susanin rayon MTS only 15 manage to keep up with their production schedules. Similar evidence of Komsomol backwardness (otstavanie) is reported from a variety of industrial and agricultural enterprises of Sudayskiy, Mezhevskiy and Kologrivskiy rayons.

Party guidance of Komsomol organizations in Turkmenian SSR is still unsatisfactory, according to PRAVDA (1 December). The Komsomols, and by implication also the Party, are said to be doing a poor job educating the youths in a number of the Republic's oblasts. The paper is particularly indignant about the lack of educational activities among the native Turkmen girls, a charge frequently leveled at the Communists of the Central Asiatic Republics. Things are still worse in the Crimea where the Komsomol failings are practically undistinguishable from those of the Party. Criticism and self-criticism are unpopular among them as is the training and selection of personnel on the basis of political reliability and business qualification. "Morally disintegrated workers who had failed in their tasks were being safeguarded from criticism" (ograzhdalis ot kritiki moralno razlozhivshiesya i provalivshiesya robotniki). Serious shortcomings "have been uncovered" (byli vskryty) in the Kirovograd and Karaganda oblast Komsomols where intro-komsomol work has been neglected and meetings have not been held for many months.

Primary Party Organizations Ignored: Regional radio and press comment on intra-party relations stresses the unpleasant fact that oblast and rayon Party committees are often prone to ignore, rather than cooperate with or maltreat as the case might be, the Primary Party Organizations. The importance of these as "the direct link with the masses" (neposredstvennaya svyaz s massami) has been emphasized time and again for the benefit of the local Party officials who apparently still prefer to by-pass them altogether or treat them as something superfluous. Thus PRAVDA stirs the regional Party machinery into action along that line by declaring editorially on 22 November that in Rostov, Yaroslavl, Chernigov, Stalino and other oblasts the relations between the Primary Organizations and higher Party echelons need looking into. Lack of "proper guidance" and relaxation of controls from above, it is claimed, have tended to weaken Party contact with the masses; they have even weakened the unity of the Primary organizations themselves since many rank-and-file communists do not even attend the regular meetings. Hints of deteriorating leadership of the Primary organizations in Odessa oblast are contained in a CHERNOMORSKA KOMUNA editorial of 25 November. The paper reports that these low-level organizations, ignored by their rayon and oblast superiors, are failing in their tasks of "maintaining close ties" between the workers, kolkhozniks and intelligentsia, on the one hand, and superior Party organs, on the other. Such failings have been evidenced particularly in Frunzenskiy, Velikomikhailovskiy and Pervomaiskiy rayons. Complaints of "loose contacts with the masses," occasioned by ignoring the Primary Party organizations, are broadcast also from Zhitomir, Kurgan and Rostov oblasts.

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IDEOLOGICAL AFFAIRS

Radio discussion of basic doctrine, ideological purity or deviations is limited in volume and diffuse in character. A complaint heard from several sources is that the Marxist-Leninist theory is still treated as an abstraction which has little if anything to do with the workaday life of the Soviet people. Attention is therefore called to the "correct ideological approach" (pravilniy ideologicheskii podkhod) to the study of Marxism both within the Party and Komsomol political schools and study circles. Since current events--whether economic, political or others--must find their "true explanation" in Marx's and Lenin's writings, it is the duty of Party ideologists, lecturers and propagandists to explain them in that light and thereby establish the "indivisibility" of Communist theory and practice.

RADYANSKA UKRAINA (22 November) speaks of the "influence of religion and manifestations of hooliganism" (vplyv religii, proyavy khuliganstva) as hampering the educational progress of the Ukrainian Komsomols. The Ukrainian Party organizations, says the paper, have done much to improve their leadership over the Komsomol but available evidence indicates that much more remains to be done, particularly in the ideological sphere of the young communists' life:

We must incessantly raise the political zeal of the youth directing it against alien and hostile influences, against the survivals of the past in the minds of the people.

Ukrainian version:

Treba nevpynno zagostryuvaty politychnu pylnist molodi, spryamovuyuchy ii proty chuzhogo, vorozhogo vplyvu na molod, proty perezhytiv mynulogo u svidomosti ludey.

The paper does not explain, of course, how religious, foreign and hostile ideas could influence young people born and raised under the Soviet regime and trained in the Komsomol. A partial explanation for that may be deduced from the references to Komsomol ideological failings in Droghbytsch oblast which is one of the recently-annexed West Ukrainian area. That the young communists there do not take easily to ideological and political education is evident from the paper's admission that during the past year over 100 political schools and study circles of the Komsomol education network simply "collapsed" (rozpalysya). On the other hand, similar un-Bolshevik influences are said to have been observed in such oblasts as Kherson and Kirovograd which, with the exception of the German occupation period, have always been part of Soviet Ukraine. And the official view on Komsomol's political progress in these oblast may be gathered from the following reference:

The propagation of the idea of Soviet patriotism and friendship of peoples is still poorly implemented, the hostile ideology of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism and rootless cosmopolitanism has not been sufficiently exposed.

Ukrainian version:

Shehe slabo vedetsya propaganda idei radyanskogo patriotizmu i druzhby narodiv, nedostatnyo vykryvayetsya vorozha ideologia ukrainskogo burzhuaznogo natsionalizmu, bezridnogo kosmopolityizmu.

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MOLOT asserts on 20 November that recent oblast, rayon and town Party meetings have revealed that the ideological level of political education is still "very low," particularly in the social sciences. Some teachers, it is pointed out, expound the Marxist-Leninist theory "in a dogmatic manner" and fail to "tie it to the practice" of communist construction. The inadequate political equipment of the teachers is said to make the "correct ideological education" of the students difficult. "This leads to broken discipline and even immoral manifestations" among the student body." (It is not explained, for instance, how insufficient ideological indoctrination can affect Party discipline or be conducive to immoral behavior.) Pursuing the theme on the next day, (21 Nov.) the paper says that political studies in certain study circles of the oblast have deteriorated to such an extent that some organizations have been compelled to transfer such students to regular political schools. The situation is reported to be extremely unsatisfactory in Chernyshevskiy, Kagalnitskiy, Selivanovskiy, Remontnoye and a number of other (unnamed) rayons.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA (26 November) urges its readers "to put an end to underestimating ideological work" and intensify the struggle against liberalism, carelessness, errors and distortions. ZVIAZDA (21 November) belabors some unnamed Belorussian scientific institutions for their "provincialism" (provintsialnost) and backwardness in science which are unbecoming of Soviet intelligentsia. Their shortcomings are said to lie in their reluctance to self-criticize and develop a free interchange of opinion. The same paper says on 1 December, referring to the Republic as a whole, "we have to admit that the level of Party propaganda ... is still very low." It adds that the improvisations employed in this field in some rayons of Malodechno, Grodno and other oblasts, "must cease at once" so that a decisive improvement in ideological education may be achieved.

A Kurtynin PRAVDA article of 2 December (not broadcast) tells of the ideological irregularities recently brought to light at a Leningrad town Party meeting. At the Institute of Ethnography, it is reported, the question of Russo-Kirghiz relations in the 19th century has been treated from a bourgeois-nationalist point of view. A report prepared by Kozhanchikov of the Zoological Institute is said to be "based entirely on Morgan's pseudo-scientific theory" (opirayushchayasya tselikom na lzhenachnuyu morganisticheskuyu kontseptsiu). Another disclosure made by Kurtynin deals with the "Commission on the History of the USSR Academy of Sciences." Created 20 years ago, that Commission has been practically inactive, forgotten and eventually became "a feeding trough for slickers" (kormushka dlya lovkachey). When its first "work" (proizvedenie) finally did reach the press it was found to be worthless (neprigodno)--it merely revealed that the important subjects treated in it had been entrusted to "pot-boilers and scientific speculators" (khalturshchiki i spekulyanty ot nauki).

MISCELLANEOUS

Noted biologist Olga Lepenshinskaya writes (TASS, 2 December) that the solution of the longevity and rejuvenation problem in the USSR may not be far off. Frogs have been successfully rejuvenated through the treatment of their red blood corpuscles with a one percent solution of soda. Trying the experiment on herself by taking "special baths according to special recipe," the biologist noted that her entire organism "grew skinnier," surplus fat disappeared and scars and adhesions in the lungs resulting from tuberculosis disappeared. Soda can accelerate the dispersion of proteins in the human body and therefore, it is claimed, "can play an important part in combatting the aging of the organism."

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RADYANSKA PRAVDA (3 December) carries a letter from two residents of Divochie Pole village, Kirovograd oblast, complaining about the poor medical service in their community. Although the village medical center (medpunkt) is supposed to render free service to all inhabitants, its chief Medvedev refuses to see any patients unless he is paid beforehand in chickens, eggs or other food products. A commission appointed by the rayon Public Health Administration to investigate the case is said to have included the same Medvedev and "his close associates in crime" among its members.

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